

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully considered the Examiner's comments in Office Action mailed September 13, 2006. In response, the abstract has been amended to comply with the word limit requirement. Claims 10-23 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants reserve the right to pursue claims 10-23 in a later-filed continuing application. Claims 1-9 remain pending in the application. Claims 1 and 9 have been amended to clarify the stent delivery system is advanced over the main guidewire. Support for this amendment can be found throughout the specification and the figures. No new matter has been added.

Reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Objections to the Abstract

Formal objections were made to the Abstract for exceeding the word limit. Editorial revisions have been made to the Abstract to place the Abstract in conformance with the rules. Applicants assert the objection is overcome and request withdrawal of the objection.

Priority

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's objection to the priority claim indicating the specification does not properly recite the relationship of the current application to the applications to which the current application claims priority.

Applicants have recently transferred the present case to the law firm of Merchant & Gould, P.C., which is currently analyzing the priority claims of each application in the family of applications to which the current application claims priority. Unfortunately, Applicants' attorneys have not yet completed their analysis of the priority claims of this family.

As a response is due, Applicants are submitting the above amendments to the claims and Abstract to address the other objections and rejections made in the Office Action. As soon Applicants' attorneys have completed their analysis, the specification will be corrected as appropriate.

If the Examiner has any questions or concerns regarding this point, then the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the below-listed telephone number.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Lashinski et al. (US 6,129,738). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1 recites, in part, positioning a main guidewire in a main vessel; advancing a stent delivery system over the main guidewire; and advancing a branch guidewire through a flexible side sheath into a branch vessel.

In contrast, Lashinski does not disclose or suggest advancing a stent delivery system over a main guidewire. The Office Action asserts the second guide wire 67 of Lashinski is equivalent to the main guidewire recited in claim 1. Applicants respectfully disagree.

The stent in Lashinski is not advanced over the second guide wire 67. Rather, the stent is advanced over the first guide wire 57. The second guide wire 67 of Lashinski is not even positioned in the main vessel until after the stent is advanced to the bifurcation. The second guide wire 67, therefore, cannot be considered equivalent to the main guidewire of claim 1.

Furthermore, the first guide wire 57 of Lashinski also cannot be considered equivalent to the main guidewire recited in claim 1. The first guide wire 57 is advanced through the first lumen 30. If the first guide wire 57 was equivalent to the main guidewire of claim 1, then the first lumen 30 of Lashinski would need to be equivalent to the catheter recited in claim 1 since the catheter is received over the main guidewire. However, the first lumen 30 is advanced into the branch vessel and not into the main vessel to deploy the stent. See Fig. 2D of Lashinski. The first lumen 30 cannot be the catheter recited in claim 1 and the first guide wire 57, therefore, cannot be the main guidewire recited in claim 1.

Neither of the guide wires 57, 67 of Lashinski are equivalent to the main guidewire recited in claim 1. For at least these reasons, Lashinski does not anticipate or suggest the invention of claim 1. Claims 2-6 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 1-6 is respectfully requested. Applicants do not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection and reserve the right to make additional arguments if necessary.

Claim 7 recites, in part, positioning a main guidewire in a main vessel; advancing a stent delivery system over the main guidewire; and advancing a branch guidewire into a branch vessel.

Applicants assert Lashinski does not anticipate claim 7 for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Claims 8 and 9 depend from claim 7 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 7-9 is respectfully requested. Applicants do not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection and reserve the right to make additional arguments if necessary.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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